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RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 5877
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RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 6965
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 0897
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DEPARTMENT FOR PA, NEA/ARN, INR/IC/CD, INR/S:STHIBEAULT AND
JMCCARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBURGEOIS, DBENZE AND
AFERNANDEZ, IIP/G/NEA-SA RWINCHESTER
WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC
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TAGS: [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [SY](#)

SUBJECT: Damascus Media Reaction: Syria/Iran, Syria/China,
Conference of Parliamentary Union of OIC Member States,
Palestinian Territories, Iraq, Lebanon (4/13)

11. Summary: Syrian papers reported President Asad's meeting with Sheikh Hashemi Rafsanjani, Head of the Iranian Expediency Council. The meeting dealt with mutual cooperation, the current regional situation, mainly in Iraq and Palestine, and the international conference due to be held in Tehran to support the Palestinian people.

Papers also highlighted President Asad's meeting on Wednesday with Wang Li Chiwan, Member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, who confirmed support for the modernization and development of Syria, restoration of the occupied Golan, and a just and comprehensive peace based on relevant international resolutions. Mr. Chiwan held a joint press conference with Assistant Secretary General of al-Ba'th Arab Socialist Party, Abdullah al-Ahmar.

The Syrian press also reported the fourth conference of the Parliamentary Union of OIC member states in Istanbul, with the participation of Mahmoud Abrash, Speaker of the Syrian Parliament, who charged that "campaigns are being launched against the future of the Islamic peoples and their beliefs, and this has become a real conflict between the west and the east." He added, "what was published regarding Prophet Mohammed revealed the true picture of the hostile media campaign against Islam and Islamic peoples." He called for a strategy to confront these challenges.

End of summary.

12. Selected Headlines:

"President Asad reviews mutual cooperation and regional developments with the Chinese Communist Party and discusses the situation in Iraq and Palestine with Rafsanjani (Government-owned Tishreen, 4/13)

"Al-Shara and Rafsanjani discuss latest developments in the Palestinian and Iraqi arenas" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 4/14)

"The Conference of the Parliamentary Union of OIC member states

inaugurated in Istanbul. Al-Abrash [Speaker of the Syrian Parliament]: A strategy for facing campaigns against Moslems has been adopted" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 4/13)

"The ministerial committee on Iraq ends deliberations in Cairo and underscores the importance of preserving Iraq's Arabism, respect, unity and sovereignty. FM Mouallem calls for formation of an Iraqi government and for withdrawal of foreign troops from Iraq" (Government-owned Tishreen, 4/13)

"Lebanese President calls for expanding investigations into the plot targeting Nassrallah" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 4/13)

"Abbas warns against a disaster due to halt of aid to Palestinians. Many Palestinians martyred and wounded during an Israeli bombardment of Gaza Strip" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 4/13)

"Prodi: The Mediterranean Basin is of high importance to Italy" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 4/13)

13. Editorial Block Quotes:

"Assassination Attempt"

Khaled al-Ashhab, an editorialist in government-owned Al-Thawra, commented (4/13): "Israel, in one way or another, was the party that planned, financed, and did the training for the attempt on the life of Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah...."

"Tools in Lebanon remained silent on the attempt.... Naturally,

they will not accuse the party that they kept accusing until recently Syria. For they are not fools, and they do not want people to accuse them of foolishness. And they will not accuse Israel in any way, not because Israel is beyond accusation, but because one cannot, no matter how fair, transparent, and courageous, disavow his heart and hands...."

"Still There Is Hope"

Isam Dari, an editorialist in government-owned Tishreen, commented (4/13): "It is sad that Arabs have been unable to adopt a united position or at least forge an economic unity, even though they know that there is no place in today's world for small countries and blocs...."

"Our big Arab homeland has all the elements of power that would enable it to establish a competitive economic bloc capable of standing fast in the world of major blocs...."

"The only way out of the difficult Arab situation lies in the reactivation of existing agreements and treaties in a way that ultimately leads to the creation of solid grounds for a unified Arab political position to confront challenges and ward off the numerous dangers...."

"Despite the complicated situation and the chronic differences, there is still hope that the Arabs will unify positions and achieve a better future...."

"Punishment of Victim"

Omar Jaftali, an editorialist in government-owned Tishreen, commented (4/13): "UN organizations are warning against a

dangerous humanitarian disaster in the Palestinian territories due to the American and European positions toward the Palestinian government.... These US and European positions are unfair and illogical.... They show blind bias toward Israel....

"They are punishing the victim because he is rejecting humiliation and the abandonment of his rights.... The world is not only watching the suffering of the Palestinian people, but also deliberately making it worse...."

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